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Inaugural Dissertation

On

Dysentery

For

The degree of Doctor of Medicine

In the

University of Pennsylvania

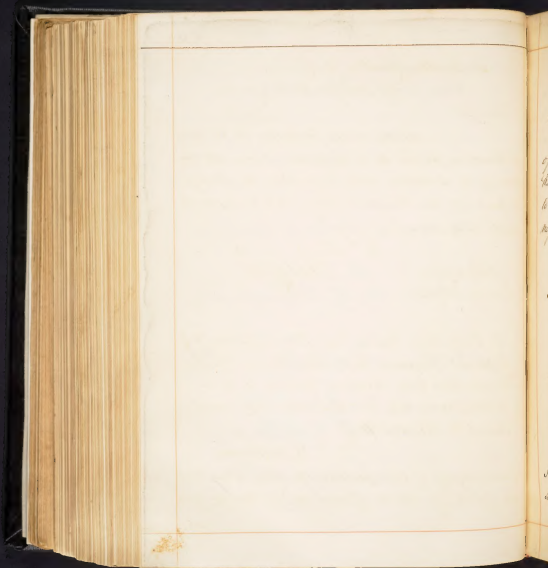
By

Nicholas H. B. Sisk

of Halifax

North Carolina

January 25th 1829



To Landon Clanton M.D.
of Halifax North Carolina

Dear Sir

As my earliest instructor in the Science
of Medicine, permit me to place your name, at the
head of the Dedication, which I have taken the liberty
to make of this inaugural Essay, and to subscribe
myself truly and affectionately

Your Obedient friend
J. L. Collitt

Philadelphia
January 15th 1829-

To Philip Syng. Physick M.D. Thomas & James M.D.
Nathaniel Chapman M.D. John Aldman Esq. M.D.
Robert Hare M.D. William Gibson M.D. —
Wm. B. Davis M.D. Wm. C. Werner M.D. and
Samuel M. Jackson M.D.

Gentlemen.

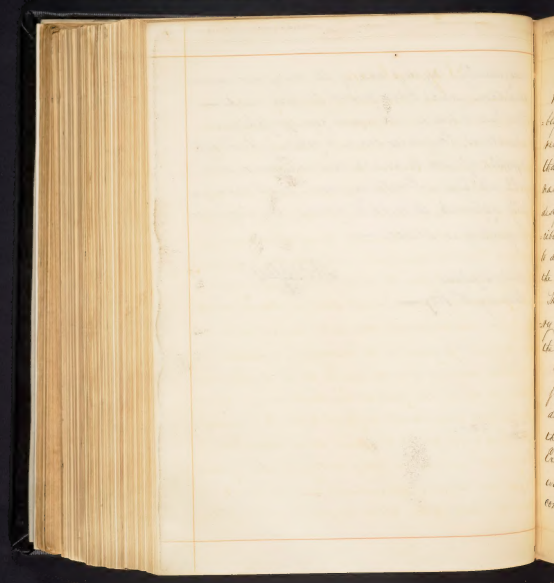
Permit myself of this, perhaps, the last time, that
an opportunity will be afforded me, of thanking you,

individually, my deep sense of the many and various
advantages, which I have derived at your hands—
I pray you to believe, that apart from professional
advantages, I can never cease to retain, a lasting
impression of your invariable kind demeanour and
polite attention— I would say more, but I know gen-
erally appreciate, the emphatic remark, "the eloquence
of gratitude is silence"—

Philadelphia

January 11th 1829—

H. L. Elliot



Dysentery

In commencing an inaugural Dissertation, I am forcibly impressed with the importance of the emphatic remark, which fell so frequently from the lips of that distinguished Teacher, the late Peter Rush-
namely, Truth is a Unit.— In accordance with my design, I have been able, to adopt the hardly less forcible language of a distinguished living Statesman and to declare "Truth is my object" — and whenever the point the way, I do not fear to follow.

This preliminary remark, is all that is deemed necessary, before entering on the immediate investigation of the subject proposed to be discussed.

Cullen defines Dysentery to be a contagious fever, in which the patient has mucus or bloody discharges, with much griping and tenesmus, the faeces for the most part being retained. Except the fact of its being contagious, the definition would not require amendment — Dysentery comes on with chills, alternating with flashes of heat,

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frequent pulse, together with tormina and tenesmus.
 In some cases, however, the local affection precedes, in
 others, the disease is preceded by loss of appetite, con-
 stipation, nausea and vomiting: then comes on inflammation.
 As the disease advances, the evacuations become more
 frequent and painful. Prolapus Ani often happens.
 The matter voided by Stool is various, being sometimes
 mostly mucus, without blood, and called by Doctor
 Rossier the "Morbis Mucosus"—and by others the
 "Dysentaria alba"—The mucous discharges
 are generally tinged with blood; upon some occa-
 sions a pure and unmixed blood is voided in
 considerable quantity. We sometimes find in the stool,
 coagulated lumps, like ~~pieces~~ pieces, of Cheese, or impacted
 mucus, or coagulated blood. In other instances the mat-
 ter voided is variously changed in colour and consistence.
 We seldom perceive in the stool, natural faeces, and
 when they do appear, it is in the form of scybala
 or somewhat hardened and separate balls. Whether
 then be voided by the efforts of nature or

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Subject is not they possess a mixture of the symptoms
 existing between and between. Connected with the sym-
 ptoms already mentioned is Fever, which renders itself felt
 the heat, heat, rest, dryness, facies tongue, the
 pulse is not very warm or, all, but dense, corded and
 hard. This may be continued as the disease or crisis
 of the fever. This fever is irregular & changing,
 after the intervention, Remittent or Intermittent pro-
 ceeds in order to Remittent or Intermittent.
 The Cases are various, various circumstances of
 weather even have to read at side, verum. An acute
 fever, a remittent, or dense, or animal, or febrile
 fever. The most peculiar, peculiar, and acute, a
 disease, or a fever, in various, of the system,
 the influence of which as a cause of this disease
 is strongly felt in some cases. At certain ages
 of life, it is almost necessary to be the presence
 of healthy action, but a strong heat, constant
 febrile, is the principle of exaltation, and
 it is the basis of life, and a morbid condition



called by Galien *Expos* induces debility is
the continuance. An exciting cause, is less easily
necessary to the production of the disease, of this,
the most frequent, is cold. It is not the degree
of cold, so much as the mode of its application,
that produces this complaint. It is, the gradual
application of cold, while the body is at rest
which always proves dangerous. A current of
air blow on a man during the night, while he
is covered only, with his linen or woollen apparel,
or if even, with the best accommodations, his
head or arms are uncovered, and exposed to
such current, he seldom escapes some ailment.
He may be seized, either with Rheumatism,
in the vicinity of the parts thus exposed,
or with cephalalgia calida, perhaps inflammation
of his lungs or intestines, either of
which I conceive to be dependent on protracted
sudden transitions from heat to cold, is also a
well known cause of many diseases. For

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every such transition is not harmful. In Russia
when the cold is intense it is a common thing
with the natives to go out of the hottest bath;
in the open air, and sit themselves all over
with snow, without experiencing the least indis-
position or smallest injury. But when from a
moderate warmth to which we have been for
some time exposed, a transition is made to a
degree of cold not very intense, it then becomes
dangerous. Cold is particularly dangerous
when accompanied with moisture - A man
will be seized with dysentery, by not changing
his clothes after being wet, particularly his
stockings. Lying in a damp room, will also
produce the same effect. It would therefore
be advisable for Europeans, persons always
to change their stockings, after having been
exposed to the inclemencies of the weather,
and to avoid sleeping in damp rooms -
How cold produces dysentery I will not attempt



an Explanation. But it has been a prevailing
 opinion among Medical Men, that cold excites
 Typhus, only by the check, which it gives to
 perspiration, forcing inward on the vessels
 those Humours which in health have free issue
 by the exhalant vessels of the skin. Another
 Cause of this disease, is the taking or drinking
 of a crimonious or putrid substance. Under
 this head may be enumerated all spoiled
 Fruits, all kinds of bad or mouldy victuals
 and Intemperance in eating and drinking. —

The Diagnosis is easy, it can only be mistaken for
 (Scarlet fever, which differs manifestly in the con-
 stitution, and if occurs can not remain the same
 without the above ~~causes~~ enlarging. —

Prognosis. Typhus similes the menses in a few
 days, but is often protracted. If not early removed,
 it becomes very serious and alarming. In some instances
 there is great prostration, the extremities become cold,
 cutting sweat breaks out, the abdomen is hard and

* See the opinion of the truly celebrated Doctor Sydenham
 on this subject in the 1st volume of his Works.



Under to the loach. Pibcher, Miroough and Gfblhis.
make their appearance, with a small fold pale,
and the urine discharges resemble the washings of
painted meat or dark granular fluid. These symptoms
are generally the precursors of "tail". We have instan-
ces on record, however, of the recovery of dysentery
after, even when acute, without the aid of blood-letting
and evoked her animus. It is therefore a duty in-
cumbent on the Physician to persist in the remedies
and not let himself be misled. In the latter
stages of this complaint, the circumstances which de-
termine a favorable termination are, a remission
of the attendant fever, pain, tenesmus and rigors,
the stool becoming moist and relaxed, the tongue cea-
ring, the stools becoming less frequent and more
natural with a diminution of the tenesmus and
incommodities. For Meriton. In the examination
after death, the liver and rectum are found
inflamed, with spots and ulcers about the Ples-
sures of the rectum. We are informed by Sir John



Single, that in cherishing a patient, who died of dysentery, the soldiers, were mistaken, and the spleen to use his own language "Corrupted".

Pathology. By Sydenham, Meslin, and many other writers, dysentery, is considered as a "fever turned in on the bowels, from suppressed perspiration, in the relief of which, they advise. Sudorifics or such medicines as have a tendency, to produce perspiration, to turn it out again; and truly, in this way they will often succeed, for by exciting and keeping up a constant diarrhoea, the determination, instead of being confined to the bowels, is by reaction invited to the surface, as equilibrium of the circulation is restored, and a speedy recovery is the result. By others, it is contended on the contrary, that the proximate cause (which is the ipse morbus) of dysentery, is an "inflammation of the mucous membrane of the intestinal canal". This doctrine was first and combated in a work, entitled, "Reponit".

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Quincke by Erich Schmidt, and his opinion
is supported, by Euler Smith in his ad-
mirable work on Typhoid Fever. "The path
between the signs of Typhoid, makes the
dilemma is inflammation, rather a symptom
an effect of the general excitement, than
an original cause of the Typhoid, and a
direct burning of feet, will verify the opinion,
for in the first stage of typhoid, when the
surface is cool, is, as soon there being any
indication of inflammation, a diminu-
tion of arterial tone exists every where, and
the substantial evidences of inflammation only
emerge with the excitement of the heart and
arteries, which succeeds the first stage of
typhoid." — It is declared by Richardson
that in Quincke as in Fever, inflammation
is not the original cause, but undoubtedly
is the principal effect, which we are
to dread and endeavour to relieve —



After a long attention to dyspepsia, as it appeared
 great numbers under my care, and also as it af-
 fected myself, I person, I am confidently a fact
 that two functions, appeared to be constantly
 disordered, from the beginning, and which either
 were preceded or were accompanied by other
 derangements. These were the functions of the
 skin and Liver or Respiration and Biliary
 secretion. I shall treat as sometimes seen on
 the surface, and occasionally as administered
 to the stools, but then are variable
 and morbid; for otherwise, the regular perspi-
 ration is suppressed and the healthy secretion
 of bile stopped. — These are the two first
 links of that morbid chain, which connects
 the remote cause, with the ultimate form
 of the disease, and if this chain be removed,
 by an early restoration of the two functions in
 question, the disease will be checked. —
 The next link in the chain of Dyspepsia,



phemia is the disturbance in the balance
of excitability and of the circulation. It is
apparent to see the sympathy existing between
the sympathy with the ~~those~~ of the skin
in consequence of which, a venous plethora
prevails, throughout the whole of the Portal
system, and the mucous membrane of the Bladder
and digestive canals are then unconsciously
developed. We may now plainly perceive
how all those consequences which I have po-
sited so often for causes, can arise. If the
plethora be great, blood itself will be poured
from the mouths of the mesenteric vessels,
hence inflammation and even ulceration
may ensue. If any hardened faeces exist in
the cells of the colon, they will be grasped
by the irritable circular fibres of the Bladder,
and rings and strictures, with augment the
torment and distress of the bowels—



mainly. The indications are to the
acute course of the, namely, -
first to subdue inflammation, and
second to restore the healthy action of the skin
as a means of removing inflammation result-
ing, without spasm and constriction, and
awakening susceptibility to remedial influence
Venesection is prominent, and should precede,
generally, all other remedial agents, in the a-
cute form of this disease - and to obtain
its salutary effects, the detractions of blood
from the arm should ^{be} large, unless the aph-
ria be great, say $\times \times 3$, we trifles will be
extruded to our ears. By copious blood letting
we remove the constriction of the intestines,
produce relaxation and moisture of the skin,
and perhaps do away the necessity of a gain
recurring to Venesection. In the commencement
of an attack of Erysipelas, the phlogosis is
generally located, in the mucous tissue of the

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of the Feltstones this coat, is very greatly predis-
 posed to Gangrene, and the inflammation in some
 instances, is so rapid that Amputation might be
 detrimental, if not absolutely forbidden, or if ad-
 mitted, the mere amputation of blood from the
 arm, might be insufficient of itself, to subdue in-
 flammation, then as an auxiliary, we should apply
 Leeches over the abdomen, & keep as symptoms
 of Phlegmon praecox. is often formed and lessening
 experience and observation inform us, that the
 application of a few Leeches near the anus, will
 afford much relief. It has been usual ever since
 the time of Hippocrates with Physicians to begin
 the treatment of the Empiema with an Emetic;
 and the Italian practice will administer an
 Emetic, secondly, of the mixture, & thirdly, of the mixture
 the Schist of chloasma and most by, of balsam
 production of the most severe consequences of most
 common, Phlegmon is the predominant symp-
 tom, and it is found that has the ascendancy

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the administration of an Emetic, might not only
 prove in various but sometimes, increase to an al-
 most violent these symptoms, which we should
 attempt to allay, if not entirely to remove.
 When the Stomach is loaded, thereby creating
 nausea and distension, then an Emetic, is certainly
 indicated, and is immediate exhibition demanded,
 if little or no relaxation be present. In such
 the second indication, it may be proper to
 resort to an Emetic. If Juvarumbe in the dose
 of ʒss to ʒi is combined with six drops of
 Camphorated oil, assisted by the Stomach, or
 Sarsaparilla at Bengal, not being extending, with
 success. In the various cases of dyspepsia, to
 evacuate the Stomach, we may give ʒi of Cam-
 phorated Sarsaparilla, or the decoction of the bark
 four hours. At the South, and during high
 degrees of temperature, the mercurial purges,
 seem to be, particularly applicable. Calomel alone
 or in combination with the Rhubarb, or Purgative



and if lively in the operation, succeeded by the
Vasomotor movement, will usually obtain. In
cases of stupor during a fever, the house physician
resorts to Calomel or the Tolu pill. It relieves
irritation or spasm more to give, various
on the stomach for Anodynes, or the Opium
and Camphor. Opium alone is. Indeed Opium and
the distilled Spirit of Wine. But when either
Irritation is commencing or is progressing to
any thing of the kind, I have seen the
combination of the Tolu Spirit and Camphor
Says, as an agent in the preparation of

Camphor vinegar.

John G. M. D. D.

It has not been used for some time, but an
odynes suggested, and others have, and, the
ready help of a calm and a little
and other unexcited, and afforded refreshing
sleep to a companion. Usually with gentle
and moderate Diaphoresis. The use of the

[Faint handwritten notes]

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with this disease, know the salutary consequences, resulting from a few hours of a disturbed sleep; that it invigorates the exhausted system, and enables the patient, to undergo such wholesome evacuations, as may be subsequently indicated. These things premised, the following prescriptions will be found a useful according to the state of the system.

R. Acid. Nitric, f. ℥
 Mithr. Camphora, f. ℥viij
 Tinct. Opii, m XL

A table spoonful every fifteen minutes
 To relieve tormina, and tenesmus. we may
 give the following

R. Ol. Ricini, f. ℥
 Pain. Cam. Accon. ℥
 Sacchar. Purificat. ℥
 Tinct. Opii. XL
 Ag. Menth. Viridis, ℥iv.

A table spoonful every hour

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R Magnes. Sulphat. ʒss.

Acid. Scell. f. ʒss.

Mixt. spoonful every 15th or 20th minutes

R Pulv. Opit. -

R Magnes. Sulphat. ʒss.

Sect. Opit. m. ʒ.

Acid. Scell. f. ʒiv

Mixt. spoonful every 15th or 20th minutes

Enema.

R Fresh melted Butter 1 pint

B Cold water 1 pint

As has been said, is applicable only to the early or inflammatory stage. It is asserted by Richter that Prolapsus is a Humoral or Catarrhal affection of the large Intestine, that inflammation arises from Irritation, and that the treatment proper is the evacuating mode. But he, who confides alone on Diaphoretics, in the



can of this disease, will find the path least way
to the instability which such a practice will occasion.
Belonging to the certain objects that the disease
is dependent on simple phlegm of the Lungs
Medicine, and to be treated by Emulsion and other
auxiliaries and avoiding Purgatives. Was each the-
sis and modes of practice, are in themselves true
and exact in the minds of Men of
most perspicacious tendency. Indeed, it is but charac-
teristic of all men, but more especially of Men
who instead of searching after Truth and
being governed by its mandates, will adhere most
firmly to Theories, carry on with them some plau-
sibility, no matter how incorrect, how improper,
or how injurious in their consequences. Practical
and not theoretical information should be the
study of all professional men, who are in possession
of Clinical medicine or knowledge. From all
the information that I can collect from various
authors on this subject; I extract that the



Skin, Liver, and other secretory organs are dis-ordered; and that the restoration of them, with proper performance of their function, should be the primary consideration of the Physician, who should adapt his medicine to such organs as might chance to be injured or diseased, for only by such happy adaptation, can healthy action be restored to those parts. The sweating treatment under some restrictions, is certainly sometimes indicated and often successful — After the inflammatory action has been reduced, and the Prima Via evacuated, to relieve Intestinal Irritation, excite the alvine discharges and produce a determination to the visceræ. We may administer the following,

℞. Cam. opii ʒijss

(atomel XVI)

Pulv. Stoeac. viij. m.

(Divide into eight doses and take one every two or three hours. But as a more power



ul. Staphenite, the Chinese order is recommended, which runs independently of the general action
to exert a kind of specific influence, on the action
of, livers and bowels. This may be performed
with the greatest advantage. And when these organs
exist with blind discharges, perhaps we could
and even in the most dangerous men advantage
over than the preceding.

Re. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20.

Re. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30.

Re. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40.

Re. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50.

Slide into rich powder. one of, or two to be
exhibited three or four times with the gripping and
blind discharges one. A cup of some kind of
rink may be occasionally administered, so
as not by over distension of the stomach, to pro
duce temporary nausea and distress. The Anti
bials, are highly spoken of by Sir George Baker
Sir Peter Pringle and many of the Eastern



Physicians in this stage of the disease. They contend that the Antimony, as a cathartic, in its effects, is more certain and of longer duration, than the acetic or Spessartian, but the preference is given to the latter by Professor St. Chapman, than when, no higher anchoring is requisite. To assist the aforementioned remedies, we should apply warm fomentations to the Stomach and Abdomen; these induce phlogosis, and consequently relieve spasm. The general use of the warm Bath has also been recommended, especially in cases of mildness. The vapour Bath, possessing the same salutary tendency, may be resorted to. Morbidly attracted blood generally and topically, re-activated the Intestinal Canal, and the disease continues unchecked, we shall experience the happiest effects, from the application of a blister large enough to involve a principal portion of the abdomen. The sinking stage



of Syphilis, is to be managed by Opium, Cast
Ammonias and Nit. Aq., with external stimulants
for this last, the use of Turpentine is the most
appropriate. When phlogosis is about to degener-
ate into gangrene, an Infusion of Capsicum
internally, as well as in the form of an Emul-
sion, is a most valuable remedy. Drinks. These
should be Demulcents, such as Marshy water,
Rice water, Mucilage of Gum Arabic, &c. &c.,
Acer. Vitis, and the Hemorrhoides. Syphilis
as it occurs in Crouded apartments, Hospitals,
&c. is said to be Contagious, which has been as-
cribed to the "Erysipelas" arising from the venen-
ous and exanthematous - but an Hypothesis
is all that. It is diametrically opposite to the
experience and observation of thousands. It
is asserted by Foster & others, the Author of a
late work on the Liver, and the diseases of
Tropical Climates, that neither dysenteries
nor its attendant, Symptomatic, fever



is contagious. It is probable, if the disease
be of a contagious nature, that Dr. Schuster,
who introduced it on so large a scale, must
have seen it, on the coast of his Province,
a year or two since. But to such the language
of the Doctor "Shall see it in the East and in
the West, in the North and in the South, in Italy,
and in Japan, in Persia and in the Pacific Provinces;
and not a single instance, have since seen it
that Syphilis does is often associated with
depression; the indication would then be, to give
the excitement, and if the pulse rise, have
recourse to venesection. In this form of the dis-
ease mercury is the only alternative and the
struggle of the patient is to be sustained by
disposable Anodynes, having a Diaphoretic
tendency, he must persevere in the use of the
mercury until Hyaline is produced. The credit
of Salivation is originally due to Sydenham
who prescribed Calomel and opium to purge,



but was ultimately convinced of the superior efficacy of Hyalium. This effect attained, the even asserts an invariable cure. The practice was nearly as successful in the hands of Lind in the West, and was found highly so by Batfour and MacLair in the East Indies.

Suckahoe

We have often occasion to admire the goodness of the Great Author of Nature, in supplying even our most necessary, still and saline, with medicinal virtues. In many parts of Maryland, there grows a plant, *Vaccinium coccineum*. "Suckahoe" is a name given to the bark of this tree. It is found in irregular, more or less oblong, often imbricated, from an inch to three inches in width, a brown, corrugated bark, the interior substance is uniform, solid, brownish, ferruginous, with little or no taste or smell. I have frequently experienced the efficacy,

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of this plant in Germany. In infusion of half
an ounce in a pint of new milk, and boiled
down to half a pint (a little sponge of
which may be taken every four or five)
will produce a gentle operation of stools, has
strong tendency to correct the bloody stools,
ulcers, tumours, and tenesmus, induces uniform
and gentle perspiration, and consequently
may be expected to give rise, within a reason-
able period to natural, sound, evacuations.
I should say that this Symplocos, is most adap-
ted to the early stage of Consumption, but on
under the impression that beneficial results
would attend the administration, in the con-
chronic form of the disease. I feel that,
has said, who knows but that at the end
of the century, blooms a plant which
is an infallible cure for the Consumption.
Why go to Europe for the *Sancti Mariani*
Stigm. apocynoides? Why not *Commersonia*



and Gardens produce the equally efflu-
 vious Garb. Let us not trample with
 disdain on the roots and herbage of our
 soil. But let us remember

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waives its revelry on the desert air"

Chyme. (undigested). This is a
 certain what is a different disease from the
 Ulcer. The stools are more easily voided, &
 and the discharges are richer than ever before.
 or the chyme tinged with blood. — It is a gross,
 just not digested, sorge, white in the line,
 florid on the margin, free dark, purulent
 hard and contracted, with an irregular
 irritated fever in the Evening. The treatment
 consists of small and frequent abstractions
 of blood from the arm, moderate purging
 and Nightingale. The Flannel bandage



or Hobbs. The mode of applying this is as follows, first a few folds of the flannel are to be laid over the abdomen, and over this a flannel bandage should be bound rather tight, and in a uniform manner, from the groin nearly to the armpits and back again. According to the present mode of applying the flannel Bandage or Hobbs, I should suppose that it would be very difficult to keep the Hobbs from slipping, to do away that inconvenience I would suggest, a Leather Case, lined with flannel, with Straps and Buckles attached to the margins, also with a Strap to run over the shoulders or on other words, this should be made like a Saddle's girth. By such an Apparatus, we can give mechanical support to the Hobbs, and keep up a uniform degree of temperature. This would certainly possess all the virtues of the Bandage, and be free from its disadvantages. If the Liver





ineffable pleasure, to have been enabled
 with propriety to say "I have deserved it"—
 A remark more closes this Essay:—"In the
 hour of distress and despair, when the hopes
 and expectations, of Families, depend on the
 existence of a Father, a Mother, a Child,
 stretched on the bed of disease, Medicine
 with its salutary aid, like an angel of light,
 dropping healing from its wings, dispels the
 gloom, wipes the brow, from afflictions eye,
 and pours the balm of comfort in the an-
 guished heart"—* But alas, this beautiful
 picture, drawn as it is by a hand, which
 holds a pencil, whose every line is touched
 with the purest tints of genius and the most
 brilliant efforts of fancy, is not always
 in truth of colouring, perfect. The beauty
 of the vision is, unhappily often lost in
 the staid touches of sober reality. Human
 skill will not always avail, proportional

exertions must sometimes prove abortive;
 and we are left to sigh over the imperfection
 of our science, and grieve over the destruction
 of our best and dearest Hopes. The most
 inglorious exertions of our art fail; the bar
 binger of immediate disease, displays his
 pallid banner; the cold dews of death,
 gather on the pale brow, of an affectionate
 Husband, a beloved Wife, or a dutiful Child,
 and where the "Monster" fails to sever the
 dearest ties, his dart is often levelled, at
 some beloved friend and companion, leaving
 us, in intensity of feeling, to exclaim

"Tis the survivor dies" —

